

issues

Message from the State Veterinarian

LAST YEAR marked the passing of an era at the Board of Animal Health (BOAH). During 2007, BOAH eliminated the state requirement for Indiana livestock to be accompanied by a certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) at exhibitions.

At the heart of dropping the CVI requirement was the recognition of the diligent work by Hoosier producers and veterinarians to make Indiana free of many animal diseases, including pseudorabies, tuberculosis and brucellosis. With the 2006 implementation of the premise identification requirement, animal agriculture in Indiana could finally rely on new technology to provide an alternate solution to the old-fashioned paper trail of years-past.

As a follow-up to the 2007 fair season, we did an informal survey of all 92 counties to find out how many county fairs followed our lead and dropped their CVI requirements. We also asked for feedback and an estimate of how many animals were exhibited at each county's fair last summer.

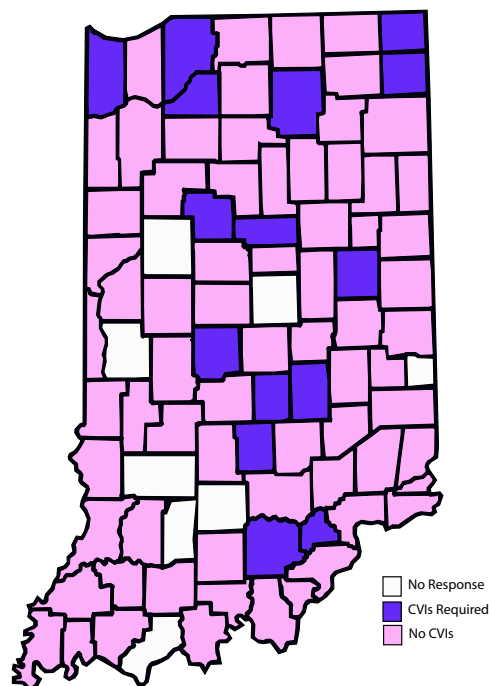
Of the 84 counties that responded, only 15 county fairs continued to require health papers for exhibition livestock in 2007 (see map).

Overall, feedback on lifting the requirement was overwhelmingly positive. Many fair organizers recognized what we've known all along—a CVI is only as accurate as what the veterinarian sees the day the paper is written. A handful of counties, in an effort to provide an extra measure of assurance to owners, hired local, private veterinarians to do visual inspections as animals were off-loaded at check-in. At least one county charged exhibitors a \$2 per-head fee to defray the cost of hiring the practitioner.

More positive feedback cited the cost savings to 4H families, as well as reducing the burden of locating available practitioners in some areas of the state. Based on feedback from 84 counties, more than 45,000 head of sheep, goats, hogs and cattle were shown at local fairs statewide. By eliminating the CVI requirement, livestock owners reaped the benefit of cost savings of an estimated \$2.25 million (based on a \$50 per head fee for a veterinary exam and CVI).

That is just one, tangible way producers are benefiting from many years of hard work.

2007 County Fair CVI Requirements



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issues

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BOAH Board Actions

DURING THEIR regular January 17 meeting, Board members will consider:

- The first reading of a rule to update Indiana's cervid health requirements, related to brucellosis, tuberculosis and chronic wasting disease. Upon passage of the rule, BOAH will host a public comment period (see Cervid section).

Companion Animal/Equine

INDIANA ENDED the year 2007 with 13 test-positive rabies cases statewide. All involved a rabid bat. Nine resulted in human exposure, while several included pet exposures. For more information about rabies prevention and safety, visit the Indiana State Board of Animal Health online at www.boah.in.gov.

YEAR-END totals for positive cases of West Nile virus were down, with only six cases—testifying to the effectiveness of vaccinations. Eastern equine encephalitis was a completely different picture. Indiana saw 40 test-positive cases, dispersed more widely throughout the state than seen before.

HORSE OWNERS travelling to Illinois should see the Premise ID section for information on new requirements.

Cervids

BOAH HAS begun training private veterinary practitioners in the collection of tissue samples from cervids for testing for chronic wasting disease (CWD). BOAH staff will no longer be collecting these samples, which must still be submitted by herd owners to establish and maintain herd health status. Cervid owners must choose to have samples collected by trained private veterinarians, participating meat processing plants, or either of Purdue's Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory locations.

Veterinarians interested in receiving training and related materials should contact their local BOAH district field veterinarian or Dr. Shelly Chavis at 260/450-2139 or schavis@boah.in.gov.

BOAH HOSTED a cervid industry meeting in December to discuss proposed changes to Indiana's cervid health rules. Among the suggested changes is removal of the permit requirement for semen and embryos entering Indiana; applying surveillance requirements only to those species known to be susceptible to CWD; establishment of two CWD herd categories, "Certified" and "Monitored;" and adjustment of surveillance requirements to form these two categories.

Board members will vote on the initial proposal at their January meeting. Meanwhile, BOAH welcomes comments from the industry and others related to health requirements for cervid herds. Comments may be submitted to: BOAH; ATTN: Gary Haynes; 805 Beachway Dr., Ste. 50; Indianapolis, IN 46224; or via email: ghaynes@boah.in.gov.

Animal Neglect/Abuse

WINTER AND early spring are the busiest times of year for calls to BOAH about animal abuse and neglect. Overall, horse-related calls are the most common. These animals are generally easily visible near roadways and attract the attention of the concerned public, particularly as pasture conditions deteriorate with snow melt, rain and lack of forage cover.

As a reminder: Neglect and abuse of all animals is against state law. Interpretation and enforcement of such cases falls under the jurisdiction of local law enforcement agencies. If someone suspects abuse or neglect, the local animal control agency

(if the city/county has one—not all jurisdictions do) or the sheriff's office should be contacted. A law enforcement agency and/or prosecutor may have to determine if the law was violated.

BOAH does not have primary enforcement powers in these cases, but will assist with animal abuse investigations upon request from a local authority—such as a county prosecutor or a sheriff. The agency will send a veterinarian to do an examination and submit a report/opinion on suspected abuse and will testify in court cases.

Premise ID

EXHIBITORS AT the Illinois State Fair will be required to bring a premise identification number to this year's event. Beginning in 2008, in addition to the State Fair, livestock exhibitors at all county, 4H and FFA fairs must have a premise ID. This rule includes horses—even those racing during fairs. Not all exhibition events are requiring a premise ID, so before travelling, participants should call ahead to the show organizers to verify individual requirements. According to Illinois Department of Agriculture officials, a premise ID is *not* required for horses entering the state for trail rides/recreation.

REGISTERING ALL Indiana livestock premises remains a priority for BOAH—even for those species, such as equine and poultry, for which registration remains voluntary. To date, 31,683 sites have been registered. The following list shows how many of those premises are associated with each species (note: some locations may have more than one species; therefore, the figures add up to more than total number of sites): Avian-4721; Bovine-22,414; Camelids-434; Goats-5130; Cervids-498; Equine-5942; Fish-14; Sheep-4440; and Swine-9537.

Avian

WILD BIRDS rarely carry avian flu viruses between Eurasia and North America, implying that the risk of the deadly H5N1 virus reaching the Americas by that route is probably low. That is the conclusion of an analysis of influenza viruses collected from North American migratory birds over a 6-year period by American and Canadian researchers. They studied 248 complete avian flu viruses and several thousand gene segments of flu viruses collected from birds in Alberta and on the New Jersey coast from 2001 through 2006. That led researchers to conclude that the Asian H5N1 strain is more likely to be introduced to the United States via illegal imports than migration.

BOAH, IN partnership with the Indiana State Department of Health and the Indiana State Poultry Association, hosted avian influenza (AI) educational meetings across the state during the last quarter of 2007. These meetings brought together first responders, planners, physicians, veterinarians and other key local officials to discuss response efforts and planning for a theoretical AI diagnosis. The day-long workshops featured speakers presenting an overview of the issue and the state's approach, followed by a tabletop discussion within break-out groups about how response to a scenario would play out. Feedback on the meetings was excellent and brought together many different disciplines to work toward "one medicine," where human and animal health intersect.

Scrapie

RECENTLY, USDA updated the national voluntary scrapie flock certification program guidelines. BOAH sent new booklets to current participants. USDA has added an "Export" category that has additional requirements to help producers comply with specifications for other countries. The major requirement for "Export" is a 7-year period to obtain certification, compared to 5 years under the voluntary program.

FY2007 SAW a decrease in the number of scrapie-positive animals reported, suggesting that the ongoing scrapie eradication program is making progress.

Cattle/Ruminants

NEBRASKA HAS imposed new importation restrictions on all bulls, cows and heifers (beef and dairy) entering the state to protect against introduction of Trichomoniasis. This new rule, which began Jan. 1,

requires additional testing and/or statements on the certificate of veterinary inspection. Details on this rule are available online at: http://www.agr.ne.gov/division/bai/trich_order_3.pdf

ON NOV. 19, 2007, the new importation requirements for cattle from Canada went into effect. The U.S. Department of Agriculture posted guidance documents which outline the specific requirements for importing cattle under the new regulations "Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy; Minimal Risk Regions; Importation of Live Bovines and Products Derived from Bovines" on the APHIS web sites at: www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/live_animals.shtml. Questions may also be directed to USDA at the National Center for Import and Export (NCIE) at 301/734-8364.

Animal Issues In Disasters Course

DURING NOVEMBER, BOAH hosted two "Animal Issues in Disaster" training courses, in Vanderburgh and Jackson Counties. Between the two classes, 72 Hoosiers completed the one-day course. As always, BOAH offers the class, at no charge, to groups interested in hosting the class. To host a course, BOAH needs 25 pre-registered participants and a classroom-style location to accommodate the students. For information on hosting an AliD class, contact Denise Derrer at 317/227-0308 or dderrer@boah.in.gov.

Meat & Poultry

DAVID BOUGH, DVM has been named Assistant Director of the Meat and Poultry Inspection Division. Dr. Bough comes to BOAH with more than 25 years of experience in private veterinary practice, primarily in the Lafayette area. He may be contacted at 317/227-0355 or dbough@boah.in.gov.

A BILL has been submitted to the Indiana General Assembly to authorize BOAH to provide voluntary grading and certification of meat and meat products. Currently, beef and pork producers who want to sell their value-added products under a USDA label of "prime," "choice," or "select" must have their products inspected in another state, or hire (at great expense) a certified USDA grader to travel to Indiana to complete the inspection. The nearest certified inspector is located in Chicago, IL. If BOAH staff complete the USDA certification program, certified inspectors would be able to provide that service locally. The bill authorizes BOAH to charge a fee for these services, which is established by USDA and necessary to recoup related expenses.

ASERT

BOAH PLANS to expand ASERT (Animal Surveillance and Emergency Response Teams) by 20 new members during 2008. ASERT is made up of 60 veterinarians, statewide, who make up 10 teams (plus an eleventh Purdue team), to support emergency planning and response in Indiana. ASERT was first formed in 2005, using Homeland Security funding. Veterinarians or veterinary technicians interested in joining ASERT should contact a BOAH field veterinarian or Dr. Marianne Ash at mash@boah.in.gov.

Dairy

THE HOTTEST topic in the dairy industry these days is continued use of rBST on farms. In response to consumer feedback, the major dairy cooperatives have asked their members to stop using the synthetic hormone in their herds, including signing affidavits as a commitment. While the product is considered safe and legal by the US Food and Drug Administration, public pressure is motivating major retailers to require their suppliers to provide rBST-free dairy products. BOAH does not regulate the use of rBST, but leaves the decision to use this product to individual producers.